

Canadian WILDERNESS

A publication of CPAWS • FALL 2023/WINTER 2023



HIGH STAKES FOR NATURE

Can the Montreal summit clinch
a global deal for biodiversity?



Display until JUNE 2023

Publication Mail Agreement 40033545

 **CPAWS**
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

A Summit for Nature

Montreal's gathering of global nations could be a watershed moment for biodiversity **JOHN GRANDY**



Becoming President of the CPAWS National Board of Trustees is, for me, an exciting climax to my nearly 20 years of volunteer work on behalf of Canadian conservation. As I pen my first *Canadian Wilderness* column, I can't think of a better moment to take on this role. For almost six decades, CPAWS has tirelessly championed conservation and protected areas as essential tools in our efforts to save nature. Now, Canada and much of the rest of the world are poised to put these tools to work as never before.

This December, Canada and other signatory nations of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD) will come together in Montreal for the final meeting of the convention's 15th Conference of the Parties (COP 15). The pandemic-delayed meeting – originally set for Kunming, China in 2020 – is expected to agree to a new post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that many hope will be the conservation counterpart to the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. Its goals and targets could point the way to a future for humanity in harmony with nature.



CPAWS SUPPORT

The change of venue to Montreal was a surprise (after concerns that China would further postpone it due to COVID-19), but the meeting speaks to Canada's reputation as a conservation leader. It's also a testament to organizations like this one – along with its generous and passionate supporters like you – that have long-pressed to keep this country focused on the fight for species and spaces.

I've witnessed CPAWS' impact firsthand. Before taking the president's chair, I was a board member for the past five years when Canada increased its protected and conserved areas by a combined amount larger than all of the Maritime provinces together. For many of these areas, CPAWS – along with First Nations, local communities and others – campaigned vigorously to secure their protected status. Meanwhile, our work in Ottawa pushed for unprecedented government funding for conservation over the past few years, including \$3.2 billion for nature protection in 2021.

At this historic moment for conservation, CPAWS continues to be at the frontier in Canada. I'm proud to serve its remarkable vision and the work that's helping to show the world how to put nature first.

John Grandy became President of the National Board of Trustees for CPAWS in September.



CPAWS is Canada's voice for wilderness. Since 1963, we've played a lead role in creating over two-thirds of Canada's protected areas.

NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- John Grandy, President (ON)
- Jennifer Smith, Vice President (QC)
- Lavinia Mohr, Treasurer and Chair, Finance Committee (ON)
- Richard Paisley, Chair, Litigation Committee (BC)
- Amber Nicol, Chair, Governance Committee (NS)
- Charles Côté, Board Personnel Officer (QC)
- Ina Lucila (AB)
- Donald McMurtry (ON)
- Lana Mezquita (AB)
- Cynthia Nemoto (ON)
- Kathy Scalzo (BC)
- Alexandra Tzannidakis (ON)
- Erik Val (YT)
- Denise Withers (BC)

TRUSTEES EMERITUS

- Stephanie Cairns
- Phil Dearden
- David Lang
- Harvey Locke
- Gordon Nelson
- Bob Peart
- Sherri Watson

EDITORIAL TEAM

- Sandra Schwartz: National Executive Director
- Tracy Walden: National Director, Communications and Development
- Jennifer Scott: National Communications Manager
- Peter Christie: Editor
- Janice McLean: Design

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Alex Abboud
- Rick Boychuk
- Laura Colella
- Ina Lucila
- Ron Thiessen
- Denise Withers

ISSN 1717-8894. Postmaster: send Canadian address changes to CPAWS, 600-100 Gloucester St., Ottawa ON K2P 0A4.

Canadian Wilderness is published twice per year (Spring, Fall) by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (charity #10686 5272 RR0001).

© 2022 Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. No part of this publication may be reproduced without express permission in writing from CPAWS.

Printed on FSC Certified paper using vegetable-based inks.



HIGH STAKES FOR NATURE

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURES

A Summit of Hope for Nature • 6

As a long-delayed global biodiversity conference moves to Montreal, CPAWS gets behind Canadian efforts to seal a new deal to reverse nature's collapse around the world.

Global Lessons from Nature's First Caretakers • 10

Canada's growing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas are likely to attract notice at Montreal's biodiversity summit.

Conservation's Consensus Builder • 14

Canadian Basile van Havre is bringing nations together for possibly the most important biodiversity agreement in history.

DEPARTMENTS

2 • PRESIDENT'S DESK A Summit for Nature

4 • CONSERVATION NEWS Alberta's largest-ever irrigation expansion raises concerns; New Outaouais protected area needs careful planning, management; Celebrating Indigenous-led marine conservation off the BC coast

16 • TRACKS ACROSS CANADA

18 • CONTACT US

*COVER: A group of peaceful climate activists with a simple message of standing together to protect our planet.
Photo: Valmedia*

*ABOVE: An elegant pair of Atlantic puffins pose on the coast of Newfoundland.
Photo: Mariusz Prusaczyk*

Alberta's largest-ever irrigation expansion raises concerns

Irrigation may not be a topic you hear about often, but in Southern Alberta, there's an almost \$1-billion irrigation expansion project that's worth talking about. The South Saskatchewan River Basin Irrigation Infrastructure Expansion Project – now rebranded as the Alberta Irrigation Modernization Program – is the largest irrigation expansion in Alberta's history and has been proceeding without any apparent consideration of environmental impacts to date.

The three reservoirs proposed under the program raise concerns about the effects on the health of Southern Alberta's rivers, especially since they are already overtaxed by current levels of water diversion for agricultural irrigation. A host of other concerns, including the in-stream flow needs of aquatic ecosystems, impacts to native grasslands, altered groundwater flows,

and impacts to species at risk, must also be addressed if this project is to proceed.

While CPAWS Southern Alberta has already submitted a letter to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) formally requesting an environmental impact assessment, we are asking you to please consider submitting your own letters to IAAC. We need to demonstrate to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada that there is broad support for requiring projects of this nature to undergo environmental impact assessments that include public consultation.

To learn more, check out Lorne Fitch's excellent article on irrigation and the future of Southern Alberta's rivers, albertawilderness.ca/irrigation-expansion-action-alert.

Katrina Graves, CPAWS Southern Alberta

Highway 41 (Buffalo Trail) South Saskatchewan River crossing near Sandy Point Park in Redcliff, Alberta. Photo: JK Gabbert



Coulonge River in western Québec is one of a dozen or so main tributaries of the Ottawa River. Photo: Simon J. Ouellet

New Outaouais protected area needs careful planning and management

In June, CPAWS Ottawa Valley and project partner CREDDO welcomed the Government of Québec's announcement that it would establish a new protected area across parts of the iconic Noire and Coulonge River watersheds in the Outaouais region. The new biodiversity reserve will cover 82,200 hectares and will be among the largest protected areas in the region. The reserve will protect mature forests, wetlands, and critical habitat for species at risk like wood turtles while supporting vital ecological connectivity between the forests of Algonquin Park and the Ottawa Valley to the south and the boreal forest to the north. While we welcome this announcement, more work needs to be done. The province needs to ensure that the design and boundaries of the reserve maximize conservation values. A management structure must ensure decisions with respect to the direction of the protected area are taken locally and that Indigenous and local communities derive economic and other benefits from these two rivers which are among the best white-water rivers in central Canada. To that end, CPAWS-OV and CREDDO will continue to engage and consult with Indigenous and local communities over the fall and winter. For more information: cpaws-ov-vo.org

John McDonnell, CPAWS Ottawa Valley

New BC coastal protected areas celebrate Indigenous-led marine conservation

This summer, the Kitasoo/Xai'xais Nation announced a new marine protected area (MPA) – the Gitdisdzu Lugyek (Kitasu Bay) MPA. Located in the waters along the Great Bear Rainforest, this MPA is governed by Kitasoo/Xai'xais knowledge and management practices and protects estuaries and kelp forests that are key habitats for whales, seabirds, salmon, and shellfish.

Indigenous-led marine conservation along British Columbia's coast is key to growing marine protection coverage while nurturing Indigenous reconciliation through conservation. Last year, the Mamalilikulla First Nation declared the gwaxdłala (Lull Bay)/'nalaxdłala (Hoeya Sound) as an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). And earlier in 2021, the Kitasoo/Xai'xais, Nuxalk, Heiltsuk, and Wuikinuxv First Nations, Parks Canada, and provincial government started a feasibility study for a National Marine Conservation Area reserve (NMCAR) along BC's central coast. These Indigenous-led conservation areas are in the Great Bear Sea, also known as the Northern Shelf Bioregion, where 17 First Nations, the federal and provincial governments are working together to create a network of MPAs. The network will establish new sites to connect existing MPAs and IPCAs, amplifying the benefits of protection to support ocean health. CPAWS-BC continues to be involved in this process with an advisory seat to advocate for strongly protected and well-managed sites within the co-governed MPA network.

Learn more about marine protected areas (MPAs) with our MPA educational series, cpawsbc.org/mpa-101-an-introduction-to-mpas

*Rippon Madtha,
CPAWS British Columbia*



Klemtu, June 21, 2022. The Kitasoo Xai'xais Nation declare a new Marine Protected Area (MPA) in Gitdisdzu Lugyek. Photo: Tavish Campbell/Moonfish Media (CNW Group/ Kitasoo Xai'xais Stewardship Authority)



Local resident of the Great Bear Rainforest. Photo: Getty Images/Bobbushphotos

● FEATURE

A SUMMIT of HOPE for NATURE



One hard working pollinator
doing its part for biodiversity.
Photo: Adobe Stock

As a long-delayed global biodiversity conference moves to Montreal, CPAWS gets behind Canadian efforts to seal a new deal to reverse nature's collapse



The African summer air was already alive with rumours, but when officials confirmed that Canada would be the final stop for what's likely to be the most important biodiversity summit in history, Alison Woodley felt a surge of excitement ripple across the Nairobi convention hall.

"It was a highlight of the meeting, actually," remembers Woodley, long-time senior strategic advisor with CPAWS's National Office. "Finally – after things had been so delayed by COVID and there was so much uncertainty about when this was going to be resolved – there was an end in sight. I think there was a sense of optimism and hope and an appreciation of Canada's willingness to welcome the world in Montreal."

Woodley was in the Kenyan capital in June as part of a Canadian delegation to a special working group meeting of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD). The group was negotiating a new, critical international agreement on nature that's expected to be finalized by nations at the convention's long-postponed 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15). Many hope the agreement will be for the extinction crisis what the Paris Accord is for climate change.

Canada's willingness to hold the COP in Montreal effectively rescued the summit – and the anticipated agreement known as the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework – from limbo. The conference, originally

The Dianchi International Convention and Exhibition Center in Kunming, China, was ready to host the UN biodiversity COP before COVID concerns led to a venue change to Montreal, Canada. Photo: Xinhua

scheduled for Fall 2020 in Kunming, China, had been derailed for two years by the pandemic, and the official host, China, remained too concerned about COVID to set a new date.

The announcement in Nairobi finally put the conference back on track and, most importantly, signaled a long-overdue endpoint for the framework negotiations. Montreal, already home to the UN CBD's permanent international secretariat, was a natural choice.

The venue change did something else as well: it shifted the spotlight to Canada, where conservation organizations such as CPAWS and others, along with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, are helping this country find its way as an emerging conservation champion and as an example to the world.

A SENSE OF URGENCY

"This is an opportunity for the federal government to demonstrate leadership," says Woodley. "But demonstrating leadership means not only advocating for ambition internationally but also demonstrating that we're doing it at home.

"CPAWS's role is to raise awareness about the importance of this and to help, along with our colleagues at other conservation organizations, to highlight

the critical importance of these negotiations and of the global effort to halt and reverse the biodiversity crisis.”

Creating a sense of urgency for a strong, effective biodiversity framework is especially needed now, says Woodley. Early drafts of the accord, including four goals and 22 targets, were praised by conservationists for aggressively tackling the biodiversity crisis and for including measures to monitor progress. Among the targets is a pledge to protect at least 30 percent of land and ocean by the end of this decade.

“We were pleased that the first draft had a solid, post-2020 protected-areas target that recognized the importance of both the quantity and quality of land and ocean protection because, of course, that’s CPAWS’s focus,” says Woodley. “Recognizing that isn’t enough on its own to halt biodiversity loss, but it absolutely has to be at the heart of any global framework.”

Soon, however, the ambitious language of the drafts raised concerns for some signatory nations. Recent negotiations, including those in Nairobi in June, failed to find agreement on key aspects of the text, and an eleventh-hour negotiation session had to be scheduled for just ahead of the COP in December.

“There’s strenuous politics happening, because there are a few showstoppers that are almost holding the process hostage,” says Justina Ray, president and senior scientist of Wildlife Conservation Society Canada. Ray has been following the framework’s negotiations – and its sticking points – closely.

For example, draft targets for cutting subsidies to industries and activities harmful to biodiversity (such as subsidies for agriculture or oil and gas) are contentious among some high-income nations. Meanwhile, many low-income nations and Indigenous groups want more conservation funding from wealthy countries historically responsible for much global environmental damage. “There’s a level of frustration and a kind of urgency with the entire thing, because these issues remain unresolved,” says Ray.

The move to Canada provided a badly needed shot of hope for the COP and for the final negotiations for an effective



In 2016, the tiny western chorus frog halted a major housing development in La Prairie, Quebec following an emergency protective order from the federal government to protect this critical habitat. Photo: WikiCommons/Benny Mazur

framework. The country has been a vocal advocate for ambitious targets, including the 30X30 protected areas aim now supported by more than 100 other nations of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People. Also important, says Ray, is Montreal’s openness, accessibility, and proximity for citizens and non-governmental organizations to raise awareness outside of the official talks.

RAISING CONSERVATION VOICES

“Civil society tends to play a fairly robust role in these international COPs, even though they’re not the parties,” explains Ray. For example, climate summits are often accompanied by parallel meetings, rallies, and marches that can dramatically alter the mood and energy of official talks. Previous biodiversity summits, on the other hand, have been more muted.

“Montreal offers a chance for a different kind of biodiversity COP,” says Ray. “I expect there will be a real presence outside of the official meetings. ... A lot of the parties listen to advice from civil society organizations and experts and, in fact, seek it.”

Alice de Swarte knows this well. When news came that the biodiversity

summit would be held in Montreal, the senior director with SNAP Québec, CPAWS’s Quebec chapter, immediately saw the global spotlight on her city as a unique opportunity to make the organization’s message heard – even if the announcement of the venue change was a little sudden. “My first reaction was like, ‘oh boy,’” de Swarte recalls, laughing. “Usually, you have two years to prepare for such an event, and here we are, and we only have six months.”

Since then, de Swarte and the SNAP Quebec team have been quickly readying for the summit. The group is helping to lead a collective of almost 60 other Quebec non-government organizations. The group is planning a high-profile march in Montreal’s streets ahead of the meeting and a simultaneous, parallel conference to explore the direct and indirect causes of biodiversity loss that build on the targets of the biodiversity framework. Other plans are still taking shape.

“We are really committed to showcasing solutions and inspirational approaches,” explains de Swarte. “We want to stress Indigenous leadership and some of the municipal actions for biodiversity conservation.



Autumn aerial of Montreal.
Photo: Firefighter Montreal

“It might be the first biodiversity COP with strong civil society mobilization around it,” says de Swarte. “I think Quebec and Montreal is a great place for this to happen, because civil society is already really organized and mobilized around this issue here. ... We really want to use the COP as an opportunity to put nature into the hearts and minds of every Montrealer and Quebecker and, by extension, every Canadian.”

ENGAGEMENT IS CRUCIAL

“We need to make sure there’s energy outside the room and inside the room,” stresses Woodley. From her ringside seat at the biodiversity framework negotiations, Woodley knows how far public awareness can go in encouraging governments to tackle these issues seriously. “Getting the political leadership around the world more engaged will help these discussions move along.

“CPAWS needs to really help ensure that energy is present in the lead-up to the COP and to encourage political engagement during the summit,” says Woodley. “The world has to recognize that we have these dual existential crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, and, unless we deal with both of them, the health of the planet – and our own well-being – is in serious trouble.”

FROM STOCKHOLM TO MONTREAL

In global efforts to save nature, Canada has been at the forefront for almost 60 years.

For almost six decades, CPAWS has been encouraging Canada to step up as a conservation champion. The decision to hold the COP15 of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal in December is the most recent example of the nation’s global environmental and conservation leadership.

1972: Canadian Maurice Strong, named as secretary general of the first United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm, rescues faltering efforts to organize the meeting and transforms it into a pivotal moment in the global environmental movement, sparking the creation of the UN Environment Programme (with Strong as its executive director) and launching a new era of international environmental cooperation.

1973: The aftermath of the Stockholm conference sees a series of international treaties for tackling environmental problems, including the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Carolina Caceres, a Canadian, is currently the chair of the standing committee that oversees the convention.

1992: Maurice Strong is appointed secretary general of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development – known as the Earth Summit – in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The conference is the birthplace of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD), which establishes its international secretariat in Montreal.

2018: Canadian Basile van Havre is appointed co-chair of a special working group of representatives of UN CBD signatory nations to draft a new post-2020 agreement to end biodiversity loss and ensure humanity lives in harmony with nature by 2050.

2022: Montreal is named as the location of the long-delayed 15th Conference of the Parties of the UN CBD to be held in December. The meeting was originally scheduled for Kunming, China in Fall 2020 but was postponed because of COVID.

GLOBAL LESSONS FROM NATURE'S FIRST CARETAKERS

Canada's Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas could help show the way for nature accord negotiators

For Greg Jeddore, the vast untamed forests and rivers across much of southern Newfoundland and Labrador are not simply the traditional territories of his Miawpukek First Nation, they're a rugged reminder of his late father's gift to him of an abiding love for the land.

"When I was growing up, my father, who was a traditional trapper and a fluent speaker of Mi'kmaw from here, showed me how to be in the woods," recalls Jeddore. "My father passed away when I was a young boy, at the age of 11, but all my time growing up, I went into the woods."

Jeddore is now forestry manager for the Natural Resources Department of the Miawpukek Mi'kamaway Mawi'omi government situated on reserve lands surrounding the Island of Newfoundland's Conne River. He is also a chief negotiator of a new forest management agreement with the province that acknowledges Miawpukek control over more than 180,000 hectares of some of the island's most intact boreal forests – including prime habitat for caribou and the endangered pine marten. Talks are ongoing to include another 300,000 hectares.

The agreement is expected to be finalized at an official signing ceremony before the end of the year, after more than a decade of negotiations by Miawpukek leaders with support by CPAWS chapters in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia. The agreement allows the First Nation to harvest timber under terms similar to a provincial timber license for industry, but it allows for a wholly Indigenous approach. It also requires the Miawpukek government to set aside a portion as protected land. Jeddore expects that, over the next five years, the agreement could result in the creation of a vast new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA), comprising about 200,000 hectares of undisturbed landscape.

NATURE ACCORD CONCERNS

The Miawpukek agreement is among the latest in a series of recent Indigenous-led conservation initiatives across Canada likely to attract notice as nations gather in Montreal in December for the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD).

The COP is expected to ratify a post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and many Indigenous groups from

around the world have expressed concern that the new accord needs to better recognize their rights and role as nature's traditional stewards. Canada's increasing number of IPCAs, its stated commitment to reconciliation, and its Indigenous conservation success stories may help them make their case.

"Clearly, there won't be success without engagement of Indigenous People and local communities," says Basile van Havre, the Canadian co-chair of the international working group negotiating the new framework. "I think there are some very real challenges facing these communities around issues of protection. Using the old models of land protection that excludes local communities won't work. What's very important for us to show is how the protection of land can be a reconciliation instrument, not a divisive instrument."

Around the globe, Indigenous-managed lands cover more than a quarter of all land area and overlap with 40 percent of all terrestrial protected areas and other "ecologically intact landscapes". Canada, says van Havre, can be a model; the country is ahead of many other parts of the world in efforts to recognize Indigenous rights and land tenure, especially in the context of conservation.

Reports suggest about 80 protected and conserved areas across Canada are considered to be IPCAs by the federal government or by Indigenous communities. Dozens more are currently being developed with funding support from Ottawa. In 2021, \$340 million in new federal funding over five years was announced to support Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship, including more than \$166 million for IPCAs.

In recent years, Canada has repeatedly vowed to protect 30 percent of its land and ocean by 2030 and is among dozens of nations pushing to include the target in the new biodiversity agreement. IPCAs are essential, says CPAWS National Executive Director Sandra Schwartz, if the country has any hope of keeping its promise.



Above: Representatives from Tr'ondek Hwech'in, Na Cho Nyak Dan, Vuntut Gwitchin, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Yukon Conservation Society, and CPAWS at the Supreme Court of Canada during the court battle that helped secure the protection of one of the largest intact ecosystems in North America, the Yukon's Peel Watershed, March 2017. Photo: Justin Van Leeuwenn Left: CPAWS staff look on as Algonquin elder Larry McDermott provides an opening prayer and remarks on advancing protected areas while working toward true reconciliation at a CPAWS-hosted reception and awards ceremony in June 2018. Photo: Martin Lipman



“Many of the opportunities for creating protected and conserved areas in this country are being led by Indigenous nations and communities,” says Schwartz. “IPCAs can help Canada reach its target, but Indigenous-led conservation in this context is also an opportunity for reconciliation: It’s our duty to nature, but it’s also our obligation to the Indigenous People who are nature’s first and best stewards.”

INDIGENOUS LANDS ARE HEALTHIEST

For Steven Nitah, that obligation continues to get short shrift at the

UN CBD negotiations. Nitah – the former chief of the Lutsel K’e Dene First Nations who helped shepherd the creation in 2019 of the 2.6-million-hectare Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area in the Northwest Territories – says that many countries still practice colonial-style conservation that often excludes or displaces Indigenous People from protected areas or prohibits them from traditional practices on the land.

“The United Nations is not moving fast enough meet the challenge,” he says “The fact that Indigenous People are caretakers of a huge quantum of

land globally in comparison to their population and the fact that these are the healthiest lands in the world, providing nature-based services, it’s not getting enough airtime.”

Canada could help show the way for other nations at the Montreal COP, says Nitah, but first, it has to do more at home to convince provincial and territorial governments – which have constitutional jurisdiction over most crown lands – to engage meaningfully in IPCA initiatives. “We need leadership at the Canadian government level to ensure there are receptive efforts by provincial and territorial



Chief Rene Chaboyer of Cumberland House Cree Nation declares the First Nation’s environmental and economic jurisdiction and protection of Kitaskīnaw, the first step in Indigenous-led protection of the Saskatchewan River Delta, June 10, 2021. Photo: CPAWS Saskatchewan. Right: Gary Carrier from the Cumberland House Cree Nation tours the Saskatchewan River Delta by air boat. Photo: Lavinia Mohr.

governments to work with Indigenous nations.”

Essential to supporting more IPCAs, explains Nitah, is encouraging governments and others to see the inherent economic value of protecting land and ocean using sustainable Indigenous management. For example, a price tag on carbon that recognizes the carbon uptake and massive storage power of IPCA forests and peatlands could make a modern business case for traditional Indigenous approaches, he says.

“Why isn’t the recognition of Indigenous Peoples, who are scientifically proven to be the best caretakers of nature – why isn’t investment put into that.”

‘WE’VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE’

The value of Indigenous conservation should be obvious to anyone who has witnessed the thriving natural splendour that’s typically found on Indigenous traditional territories, says Greg Jeddore.

“Indigenous Peoples have been looking after the land for thousands of years,” he says. “What mother nature offered us, we looked after. Things survived the way they are and flourished, because we are the protectors of the land.

“You’ll hear that right across Canada: The land needs guardians, and we are there. We’ve always been there. We didn’t go anywhere.”

CANADIAN INDIGENOUS LANDS HAVE MORE SPECIES

Lands managed by Indigenous Peoples in Canada are as good as, or better, for biodiversity conservation than protected areas, and much richer with vertebrate animal species than similar lands without protection, according to researchers at the University of British Columbia.

Peter Arcese, UBC Forest Renewal Chair in Conservation Biology, is among a team of scientists behind research that lends empirical support to the long-held view that the millennia-old land-stewardship traditions of Indigenous Peoples are good for nature. The 2019 study, published in the journal *Environmental Science and Policy*, found that Indigenous-managed lands in Canada, as well as those in Australia and Brazil, have more species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians compared to similarly situated protected areas or randomly selected non-protected areas across the three countries. The lands were also found to support more species considered to be threatened with extinction.

“I think when it comes to the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity] COP that it’s an important reminder to have Indigenous Peoples as part of the discussion,” Arcese says. “As conservation biologists, we want everyone with agency over the land to maintain it, and many think Indigenous Peoples are in a good place to do that.”

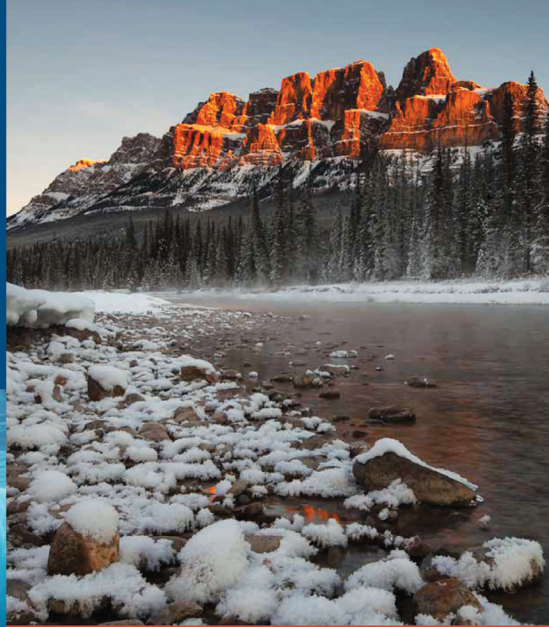
Previous studies have shown that the traditional Indigenous land-management practices maintain more native and rare species than other approaches and are less likely to raze forests or degrade the land.

By showing that Indigenous-managed lands support an equivalent number of native species as landscapes currently managed as national parks, Arcese and co-authors demonstrate the importance of collaborating with Indigenous Peoples in land-based conservation efforts that enhance human well-being and advance new global biodiversity targets.

“When you talk about conserving caribou or other wide-ranging species,” says Arcese, “you must do that with the collaboration of Indigenous Peoples.”



APRIL 1, 2021 –
MARCH 31, 2022



Impact Report

2021-2022



As the world continued to cope with the implications of a global pandemic and other disruptions, the commitment to conservation in Canada held steady.

Check out the CPAWS 2021-2022 Impact Report for conservation wins and advancements, cpaws.org/successes.





CONSERVATION'S CONSENSUS BUILDER

Canadian Basile van Havre is bringing nations together for possibly the most important biodiversity agreement in history

In 2018, when Basile van Havre began shepherding nations toward a new agreement to end the extinction crisis, he considered it a temporary assignment.

The passionate conservationist and long-time Canadian government official was appointed co-chair (along with Francis Ogwal of Uganda) of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD) working group to negotiate a post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) – an international accord on nature that many compare to the Paris agreement on climate.

Back then, the biodiversity framework was to be finalized before the 15th Convention of the Parties (COP15) set for 2020 in China. Van Havre, in turn, expected to return to his Ottawa post as director general for Domestic and International Biodiversity Policy with Environment and Climate Change Canada and director for Population Conservation and Management with the Canadian Wildlife Service.

COVID-19, however, had other plans. The pandemic slowed and, at times, stalled the process. Four years later, van Havre is still coaxing signatory countries along a path toward compromise and readying the new framework for its hoped-for approval at the convention's long-delayed final COP15 meeting in Montreal in December. In an interview with *Canadian Wilderness*, van Havre reflects on the lessons learned from a prolonged and pandemic-affected effort to chart a course to save life on Earth.

How has the pandemic and its delays affected the GBF negotiations?

It's a multifaceted impact with both negative and positive effects. Frankly, if we were to have completed our negotiations in just two years, it would've been a very coarse framework. The additional two years enabled us to dig into the science a lot and to engage in much more detailed discussions.

On the other hand, we've suffered a bit of fatigue from working online. I think we pushed the limits of online negotiations as far as we could, and there was some damage along the way. We also had double the normal turnover of staff.

You've warned that "the stakes are high" for these negotiations. Can you explain?

Well, about half or two-thirds of the global economy depends on nature – be it for food, fibre, timber, or protection from severe weather events. We as a species depend on the availability of food, et cetera, and protection from diseases. And I've not even talked about the moral value we attach to nature.

So, why do we need to take action now? The world is evolving, and we're going to be adding half a billion people. [...] We have to find ways to be a lot more efficient in terms of using the resources we have. And the sooner we start addressing this issue, the better it will be – and the cheaper it will be.

How important are the GBF targets to protect at least 30 percent of land and ocean by 2030, as well as other area-based conservation measures in the GBF?

There are five direct drivers of biodiversity loss, and a successful plan is a plan that addresses all five drivers. One of those is change in the uses of land and sea. That's [addressed by] the first three targets, but clearly there will be no successful plan without addressing the other drivers as well. [...]

There is a formidable coalition behind 30X30, but we need to talk about land-use planning and sea-use planning that manages a hundred percent of the landscape.

What's needed for these negotiations to succeed?

If we get a strong set of goals and targets, that's one thing. Second, we need to put in place a system that enables us to track progress. [...] So, we're going to need a system to assemble all those contributions and to make sure that they are adapted to what we want most in terms of quantity and quality, and then a system that enables us to show progress. [...] There is a real willingness to do more and to have a more robust system, I think.

Can you comment on the role of organizations, like CPAWS, that bring conservation issues to the attention of the public and politicians?

The CBD is probably one of the most open negotiation processes that there is in the UN system. Is it perfect? Probably not. But I see organizations like CPAWS playing a very important role in carrying the voice of their members to the national governments, making it known that these issues are important. [...]

Groups that bring forward those values are very powerful and can influence the position of governments. [...] What I can tell you is that Canada has been a leader in reporting and following through, et cetera, with respect to the convention. Doing it right is a good place to start; the importance of leadership can't be overstated.



**WHAT WILL
YOUR LEGACY
BE?** A Will can be a
powerful tool for change
in the world.

By adding a charitable gift to CPAWS in your Will, you'll be helping to conserve our country's magnificent wilderness forever. Getting started is easier than you think, visit willpower.ca/charities/cpaws for more information.



Bear in Kluane National Park Reserve in June 2021. Photo: Adil Darvesh

YUKON

While we deal with accelerated climate change, the North is seeing less of the same impacts from the biodiversity crisis that much of Canada is facing. As conservation frameworks are adopted at COP15, the Yukon is poised to be a conservation leader. **CPAWS Yukon** is closely working with First Nations, Yukoners, and all levels of government to ensure that policies and practices reflect the cultural and ecological values we hold dear. Learn more: cpawsyukon.org.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

In August, **CPAWS BC** celebrated when Wilps Gwininitxw, a Gitksan First Nation house group, declared their entire Laxyip (territory) in northwestern BC protected under traditional Gitksan law. Located in the upper Skeena River watershed, the 170,000-hectare Gwininitxw Indigenous Protected Area sustains old-growth forests, which are critical habitats for grizzlies, wild salmon, and mountain goats. BC needs to prioritize nature and collaborate with all levels of government to support Indigenous-led proposals on the path to 30x30. Learn more: <https://besthope.ca>.

Sundown at Gitanmaax Hall in 'Ksan historical village in Hazelton, BC. Behind stands the snowy summit of Stegyoden (Roche de Boule Mountain), a revered site to the Gitksan Peoples. Photo: Adam Combs



Aerial View of Lake Claire.
Photo: Global Forest Watch Canada

ALBERTA

CPAWS Northern AB released an open letter calling on federal and provincial governments to urgently address threats to Wood Buffalo National Park. The World Heritage Committee's second investigation into the park's deteriorating conditions was held in August 2022, which is a step towards a listing as World Heritage "In Danger." Wood Buffalo holds several "Outstanding Universal Values" and therefore, it is crucial that threats to its ecological and cultural integrity are addressed. Learn more: <https://cpawsnab.org/groups-welcome-international-investigation-into-the-condition-of-wood-buffalo-national-park-canadas-largest-national-park-facing-the-biggest-dangers>.





Bird houses line the animal-friendly fence in the Northeast Swale, Saskatoon. Photo: Ryan Mathews

SASKATCHEWAN

CPAWS Saskatchewan is excited to be involved in the engagement and planning process for a potential designation of a National Urban Park within the Saskatoon region. The chapter continues to engage with Parks Canada, Meewasin Valley Authority, and other stakeholders to ensure important cultural and biodiverse landscapes remain connected, healthy, and central to a park’s vision – for the benefit of people and the biodiversity these spaces support. Learn more: cpaws-sask.org/urbanconservation.

MANITOBA

Over the summer, **CPAWS Manitoba** hosted 22 nature club activities and 58 outreach events and accumulated over 10,000 signatures in support of its Polar Bear, Hudson Bay, Seal River Watershed, and southern Interlake campaigns. CPAWS MB has also

returned to doing in-school presentations and an after-school program in three local schools.

Amidst all this activity CPAWS MB moved into a new office space south of Downtown near the Assiniboine River. Learn more about CPAWS

Manitoba’s conservation programs at cpawsmb.org.



Polar bear in Hudson Bay during the summer. Photo: Shutterstock

ONTARIO

CPAWS Wildlands League had an incredible, week-long expedition to the Hudson Bay coast. The team travelled with Indigenous guides and leaders, a film crew, and marine biologists to explore the magnificent landscape and hear first-hand Peawanuck’s desire to build community capacity, expand environmental monitoring, and protect marine biodiversity through the National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) initiative. Learn more about Wildlands’ work in Hudson and James Bay to create an NMCA at the world’s largest inland sea: marine.wildlandsleague.org.



The Wildlands Expedition team on Hudson Bay. Photo: Trevor Hesselink

Once again, this summer, **CPAWS Ottawa Valley** hosted the Dumoine River Art for Wilderness (DRAW) Retreat, an annual artist residency program in support of the ongoing protection of the Dumoine River and its sister rivers, the Noire and the Coulonge, also known as the Three Rivers.

CPAWS OV, in partnership with SNAP Québec, continued to connect people with nature with the Thanks to Nature fundraiser where 100% of the funds raised are reinvested to benefit biodiversity and the protection of Eastern Ontario and Quebec’s natural environments. Learn more: www.cpaws-ov-vo.org.

QUEBEC

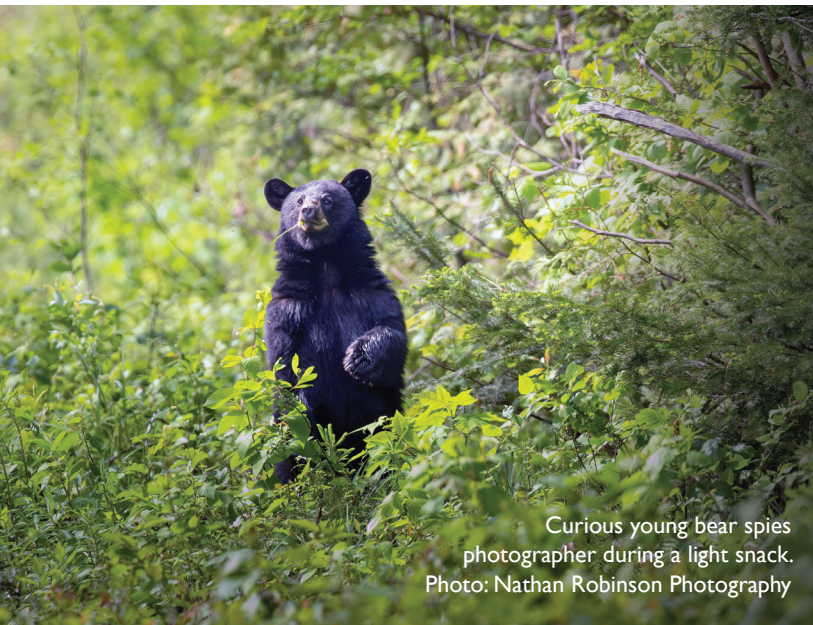
This summer, **SNAP Québec** and a coalition of 20 partner organizations launched a campaign to create a national park at Lake Walker. Lake Walker is a unique natural and geological jewel on the North Shore, and the deepest lake in Quebec.

SNAP Québec also celebrated the success of its ecological restoration pilot project on Sainte-Thérèse Island. More than 7,000 trees were planted in the last few months thanks to over 300 volunteers. This 5.4 km² public territory represents the largest opportunity for the enhancement of and access to nature in the greater Montréal area. Learn more: snapquebec.org.

NEW BRUNSWICK

CPAWS NB is celebrating the first step towards doubling nature protection in the province. In July almost 100,000 hectares of new protected areas were announced, bringing the provincial total of land protected to 6%. Along with over 110 groups and individuals, CPAWS NB nominated areas across the province to be considered for protection.

While this is a great step forward, CPAWS NB is encouraging the government to work with Indigenous Nations to set the province on a path to meet its future conservation targets. Learn more: cpawnsb.org/campaigns/protected-areas.



Curious young bear spies photographer during a light snack.
Photo: Nathan Robinson Photography



CPAWS NS doing fieldwork at Archibald Lake. Photo: Chris Miller

NOVA SCOTIA

CPAWS NS has been busy doing field research at Archibald Lake Wilderness Area to identify species-at-risk populations. In total, 26 rare species were identified, including 5 that are listed under Nova Scotia's Endangered Species Act. Archibald Lake is an ecological hotspot in Guysborough County that is threatened by an open-pit gold mine proposal. These results help demonstrate to the Nova Scotia government that legal protection is urgently required. More fieldwork is planned.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

This summer **CPAWS NL** made the difficult decision to suspend the public Puffin Patrol Program. This stemmed from advice received by the Public Health Agency of Canada due to the uncertainty of the Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, advising that members of the public should not handle wild birds or other wildlife. Learn more about how CPAWS-NL is continuing to safely help stranded puffins and petrels, as well as light attraction research happening here: cpawnsnl.org/ppp-suspended.

● CONTACT US

CPAWS National Office
600 – 100 Gloucester St
Ottawa, ON K2P 0A4
613-569-7226 or 1-800-333-WILD
info@cpaws.org; www.cpaws.org

CPAWS British Columbia
604-685-7445
www.cpawsbc.org

CPAWS Southern Alberta
403-232-6686
www.cpaws-southernalberta.org

CPAWS Northern Alberta
780-328-3780
www.cpawsnab.org

CPAWS Saskatchewan
306-500-7545
www.cpaws-sask.org

CPAWS Manitoba
204-949-0782
www.cpawsemb.org

CPAWS Ottawa Valley
819-778-3355
www.cpaws-ov-vo.org

CPAWS Wildlands League
416-971-9453 or 1-866-510-WILD
www.wildlandsleague.org

SNAP Québec
514-278-7627
www.snapquebec.org


CPAWS New Brunswick
506-452-9902
www.cpawnsb.org

CPAWS Nova Scotia
902-446-4155
www.cpawnsns.org

CPAWS Newfoundland
709-726-5800
www.cpawnsnl.org

CPAWS Yukon
867-393-8080
www.cpawsyukon.org

CPAWS Northwest Territories
867-873-9893
www.cpawsnwt.org



CPAWS

CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

*Paddle Canada's iconic river with
Canada's iconic canoe company*



Black Feather
the wilderness adventure company

Proud supporter of CPAWS.
Making Nahanni dreams
happen since 1971

www.blackfeather.com

GIVING TUESDAY

Nov
29

Imagine what the future would
be without nature.

Please give,
together we can
make a difference!



IMPAC 5

TAKE A STAND TO PROTECT THE OCEAN

JOIN US AT IMPAC5:
THE FIFTH INTERNATIONAL
MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS

VANCOUVER, CANADA | 3-9 FEBRUARY 2023 | WWW.IMPAC5.CA



CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



Want to help fundraise for CPAWS with your event, product, or activity?
Contact Vicki Dimillo at vdimillo@cpaws.org



WE CAN'T WAIT.

Photo: Prairie Rising

Join the movement to protect
at least 30% of land and ocean
in Canada by 2030.

Visit cpaws.org/wecantwait